

Message Text

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R 301333Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1180

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONGEN STRASBOURG

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 050

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: MIXED ULSTER REACTION TO STRASBOURG CALL FOR COALITION

1. REACTION OF ULSTER POLITICIANS TO RESOLUTION BY PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF COUNCIL OF EUROPE JAN 29 CALLING FOR STRONG COALITION GOVERNMENT DIVIDED PREDICTABLY ALONG SECTARIAN LINES. UNITED ULSTER COALITION AND OFFICIAL UNIONIST LEADER HARRY WEST TERMED IT "EXTRAORDINARY" THAT ASSEMBLY SHOULD DEBATE NORTHERN IRELAND IN ABSENCE ANY REPRESENTATIVE FROM PROVINCE. ORANGE ORDER GRAND MASTER MARTIN SMYTH STATED ASSEMBLY SHOWED ARROGANCE AND IGNORANCE. ALLIANCE PARTY SPOKESMAN DOUBTED WHETHER DEVELOPMENT HELPFUL IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. UNIONIST PARTY NORTHERN IRELAND (FAULKNER) HAD MOST FAVORABLE REACTION SEE COUNCIL DECISION AS "...ONE MORE CLARION CALL TO ULSTER POLITICIANS TO HAVE SOME SENSE." SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY SPOKESMAN PADDY DEVLIN AND JOHN HUME MILDLY AND GENERALL WELCOMED RESOLUTION ALONG LINES THAT ASSEMBLY HAD WIDE EXPERIENCE OF PROBLEMS OF DIVIDED COMMUNITIES AND IN EUROPE COALITION GOVERNMENTS HAD BEEN HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL.

2. VANGUNARD PARTY, LONELY LOYALIST GROUP ADVCOATING AGREED

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COALITION, MOST VOCIFEROUS IN OBJECTIONS TO INTERVENTION.

PRESS SPOKESMAN DAVID BURNSIDE DEPLORED "PATRONIZING INTERFERENCE" IN WORK ULSTER REPRESENTATIVES ELECTED CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION AND CONDEMNED USE OF TERM "POWER-SHARING" AS EMOTIVE AND OF NO MEANING BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM. HE SAID ULSTER SUFFERED FROM CONTINUED OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE FROM PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS WHO KNOW WHAT IS BEST FOR ULSTER AND GAVE WHAT HE TERMED HIS BEST ADVICE ".....MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS."

3. LOCAL PRESS REPORTS OF DEBATE AND RESOLUTION INDICATE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM STUDIED AND DISCUSSED THOROUGHLY WITH POSITIVE AND MODERATE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BOTH POLITICAL GROUPS IN REPUBLIC AND FROM REPRESENTATIVES BRITISH CONSERVATIVE PARTY. FACT THAT ONE CONSERVATIVE MP (CRITCHLEY) ABSTAINED FROM VOTE AFTER ADVOCATING RETURN TO MAJORITY RULE DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT IN DEBATE RECEIVED SOME ATTENTION HERE BUT MORE AS CURIO THAN AS SIGN THAT THERE MOOD AMONG CONSERVATIVES TENDING TO RESTORE SUPPORT FOR LOYALIST POLICIES. CONGEN SEES NO HELPFUL EFFECT ON LOCAL SITUATION FROM ASSEMBLY ACTION EXCEPT PERHAPS PRACTICALLY SUBLIMINAL REMINDER TO ULSTER POLITICAL LEADERS THAT SOMETBODY OUT THERE IS WATCHING.
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